

Pt of 7/B



## DECLARATION OF ROBERT J. BELETSKY

I, Robert J. Beletsky, do aver and state:

1. I am the inventor in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/370,388 and in charge of Research and Development at Bianchi International, the assignee of this invention.
2. I have read U.S. Patent 6,138,330 to J. A. Galbreath filed February 12, 1999 and issued October 31, 2000.
3. Prior to February 12, 1999, I had been actively working to develop improved edge released telescoping buckles having an overriding lock.
4. In 1998 I made rough sketches of possible buckle designs incorporating an overriding lock.
5. In January of 1999, I asked Carl Eerdmans, who works under me in the Bianchi International Research and Development Department, to prepare computer drawings of three of my different buckle designs, all providing overriding locks. Copies of those designs BELT BUCKLE SET #1, BELT BUCKLE SET #2, AND BELT BUCKLE SET #3 are attached hereto and incorporated by reference as Exhibits A, B, C, respectively. Each of these drawings were approved by me on

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January 27, 1999. The drawings, Exhibits A, B and C, also include witnessing dates by Patent Attorney John E. Wagner as "Read and Understood", and the signature of Mr. Wagner and dated as of February 1, 1999.

6. In the prosecution of this patent application, claims 1-4, 10, 11, and 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,138,330 to J. A. Galbreath having a filing date of February 12, 1999.
7. Claims 1, 10, 14, and 15 of my patent application read directly upon the embodiments of Exhibits A, B, and C.
8. Claims 3, 4, 16, and 17 of my patent application read directly upon the embodiments of Exhibit C.
9. Claim 5 of my patent application reads directly upon the embodiments of Exhibits A, B and C.
10. Development continued at our company and BELT BUCKLE SET #4 was drawn under my direction by Carl Eerdmans on February 24, 1999, and witnessed by Mr. John E. Wagner on March 1, 1999. The drawing BELT BUCKLE SET #4 is attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit D. This version required the tongue to be depressed upon insertion of the male buckle part into the female buckle part, but all of the claims set forth above continue to read upon Exhibit D.

11. A further refinement in the buckle design was made in April of 1999 in which the button shape was changed from circular to rectangular and the front opening in the female part was changed to match. These changes are reflected in the drawing BIANCHI BUCKLE #4, HOW IT WORKS, drawn by me and dated 4/19/99. This drawing is attached hereto and incorporated by reference herein as Exhibit E. Each of the claims set forth above in Paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 read upon the embodiment shown in Exhibit E.
12. Following completion of Exhibit E, I directed Carl Eerdmans to proceed with producing the drawings Nos. 642095 and 642096, Revision B. These drawings were completed June 10, 1999, and were used to order a prototype buckle from the producer, National Molding Corporation, of Farmington, New York, in early August 1999. These drawings are identified as Exhibit F.
13. The first successful prototype produced was sent from National Molding Corporation to Bianchi International on October 26, 1999. A photograph of this white prototype is identified as Exhibit G.
14. The above chronology represents a usual and typical progression of development in the normal course of business toward producing a new product at Bianchi International.

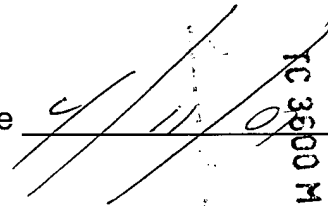
I hereby declare that all statements made herein are true and that all statements made herein on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or document or any registration resulting therefrom.

Signed



Robert J. Beletsky

Date



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I:\Patent\Bianchi\556.Declaration of Robert J. Beletsky.doc



## DECLARATION OF CARL EERDMANS

I, CARL EERDMANS, do aver and state:

1. I am employed in the Research and Development Department of Bianchi International, reporting to Robert J. Beletsky, inventor of the subject matter of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/370,388.
2. During 1998, I was aware of a development effort by Mr. Beletsky to design an improved edge released telescoping buckle having an overriding lock. Before February 12, 1999, I made the drawings, identified as Exhibits A, B and C following Mr. Beletsky's direction and his sketches..
3. I later made the drawing under Robert J. Beletsky's direction identified as BUCKLE NO. 4 - HOW IT WORKS dated February 24, 1999, identified as Exhibit D, and was asked to produce working drawings. I then prepared Bianchi International Drawings Nos. 642095 and 642096, Revision B, identified as Exhibit F. To my knowledge, these drawings dated June 10, 1999, were used to request a tooling price quotation and order a prototype buckle to be produced from our drawing from National Molding Corporation of Farmingdale, New York. Bianchi International obtains all its mold's prototypes and molded production parts from outside vendors, particularly National Molding Corporation.

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4. I have seen the white prototype identified as Exhibit G, manually tested it and it worked satisfactorily.

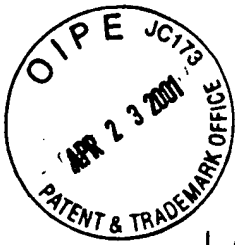
5. It is my understanding and belief that following receipt of this prototype buckle in October of 1999, an order for a quantity of preproduction prototype buckles was placed with National Molding Corporation.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein are true and that all statements made herein on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or document or any registration resulting therefrom.

Signed Carl Eerdmans  
Carl Eerdmans

Date April 10, 2001





## DECLARATION OF ANTHONY G. LEFEBER

I, ANTHONY G. LEFEBER, do aver and state:

1. I am employed in the Research and Development Department of Bianchi International, reporting to Robert J. Beletsky, inventor of the subject matter of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/370,386.
2. To my knowledge, Mr. Beletsky began the design and development of an improved edge release telescoping buckle in 1998 with rough sketches resulting in a drawing as Exhibit D being completed by co-worker Carl Eerdmans as of February 24, 1999.
3. In April of 1999, an improvement in the buckle design was made in which the button shape was changed from circular to rectangular, and the front opening of the female member changed to match. These changes were reflected in the drawing BIANCHI BUCKLE NO. 4, bearing the name of Robert J. Beletsky and identified as Exhibit E.
4. Bianchi drawing Nos. 642095 and 642096, "Revision B", incorporating further refinements and identifying the material used as Black Acetal were completed June 10, 1999. Since Bianchi International had no facility to mold such parts, the

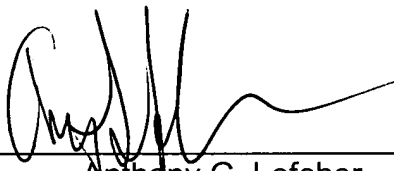
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"Revision B" drawings were sent to National Moldings Corporation (NMC) in early August 1999 with a request for quotation. A tooling quotation was received from NMC bearing a date of August 18, 1999. (Exhibit F)

5. Bianchi International order No. 14873 was written on August 30, 1999, for NMC to build tooling for the buckle parts.
6. A first prototype was sent from NMC to Bianchi on October 11, 1999. This prototype did not operate as intended and required some redesign.
7. A second prototype was review from NMC by Bianchi October 26, 1999, incorporating the redesign. This white prototype operated satisfactorily. It is shown in a photograph identified as Exhibit G.
8. Tooling and preproduction prototypes were ordered after receipt of the second prototype.
9. In my experience, the above chronology represents a usual and typical progression of development toward producing a new product at Bianchi International.



I hereby declare that all statements made herein are true and that all statements made herein on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or document or any registration resulting therefrom.

Signed   
Anthony G. Lefeber

Date 4/11/2001

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## DECLARATION OF PAUL K. ELDREDGE

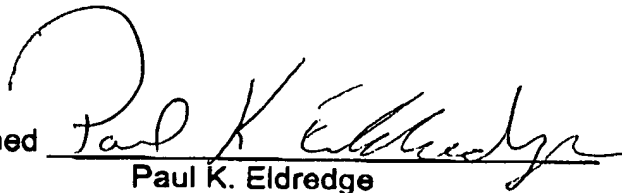
I, PAUL K. ELDREDGE, do aver and state:

1. I am a Product Manager employed by National Molding Corporation.
2. During the course of my employment, I have been involved in the production engineering and production of an edge released telescoping buckle for Bianchi International of Temecula, California
3. At the request of Tony Lefeber of Bianchi International, I prepared a time line covering the ordering, production and delivery of the buckle parts identified as NMC 7568/7569. This time line appears in the attached letter dated February 20, 2001, to Tony Lefeber.
4. National Molding Corporation initially received Bianchi International drawings Nos. 642095 and 642096, Revision B, which are the drawings referred to in my letter of February 20, 2001, as "rev. B part print" received in early August 1999.
5. The second prototype which was sent on October 26, 1999, while not a production engineered design, functioned adequately after a redesign, which was accomplished during October of 1999.

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6. My letter of February 20, 2001, enumerates various steps subsequent to October of 1999 taken in connection with tooling and subsequent production of preproduction samples of the buckle parts.
7. I hereby declare that all statements made herein are true and that all statements made herein on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or document or any registration resulting therefrom.

Signed

  
Paul K. EldredgeDate MAR. 30, 2001



N A T I O N A L M O L D I N G C O R P O R A T I O N

Tuesday, February 20, 2001

Tony LeFeber  
Bianchi International  
27969 Jefferson  
Temecula, CA 92590



**Subject: NMC 7568/7569**

Dear Tony:

Per your request, this afternoon here is the time line for the subject parts:

- Received rev. B part print dated 6/25/99 early August 1999.
- Tooling Quotation # 23246, dated august 18, 1999 was sent to Bianchi.
- Bianchi order # 14873 was written on August 30, 1999 for NMC to build tooling.
- NMC work order written and sent to NMC Engineering on 9/7/1999.
- 1<sup>st</sup> prototype sent on October 11, 1999. Needed to redesigned to function.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> prototype sent on October 26, 1999. With redesign incorporated into part.
- Placed with toolmaker November 2, 1999.
- 1<sup>st</sup> off-production tool samples sent 3/26/2000. From toolmaker.
- Mold received 4/10/2000 from toolmaker.
- Final samples with all of the corrections to make the part function properly sent on 6/29/2000.
- Approved by Bianchi on 7/12/2000.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call me at (631) 293-8696.

Sincerely,

Paul K. Eldredge  
Duraflex Product Manager

cc: Engineering File  
Gary Fraze - NMC Sales Mgr.  
John Howard Company

Five Dubon Court, Farmingdale, New York 11735  
631.293.8696 / Fax: 631.293.8575 / [www.nationalmolding.com](http://www.nationalmolding.com)

C:\PAUL'S STUFF\02-01\7568-7569 TIME LINE 2-20-1.DOC

NOTES:

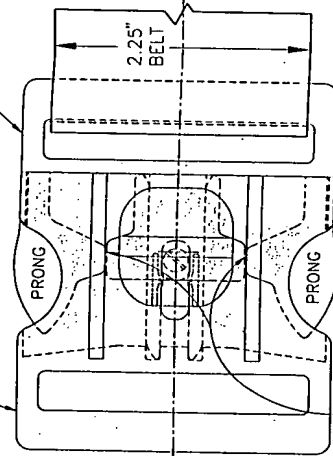
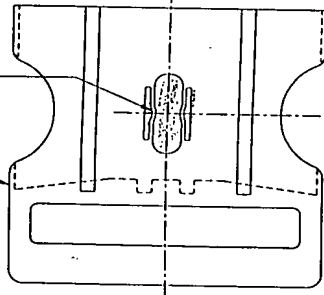
# BUCKLE ASSY SHOWN LOCKED

DETENTS  
HOLD LOCKOUT TO  
LEFT OR RIGHT

BUCKLE, FEMALE (2)

BUCKLE, FEMALE (2)

BUCKLE, MALE (1)



1st, SLIDE THE  
LOCKOUT TO THE LEFT

3rd, PULL THE  
MALE OUT  
OF THE FEMALE  
BUCKLE

A

A

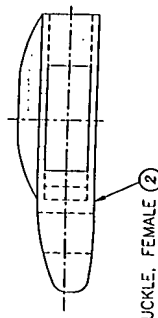
BUCKLE, MALE (1)

THE LOBES  
ARE NOW CLEAR  
OF THE PRONGS

THESE LOBES PREVENT  
THE PRONGS FROM  
TRAVELING INWARD

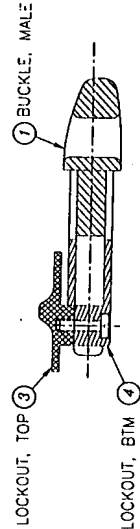
LOCKOUT, TOP (3)

LOCKOUT, BTM (4)



BUCKLE, FEMALE (2)

LOCKOUT IS TO THE RIGHT

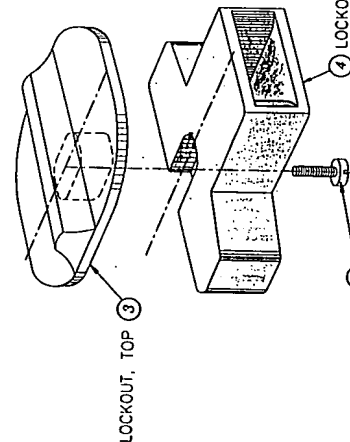


LOCKOUT, TOP (3)

LOCKOUT, BTM (4)

SECTION A-A

2nd, NOW YOU CAN PINCH THE  
SIDE PRONGS INWARD



LOBE

LOBE

LOCKOUT, TOP (3)

LOCKOUT, BTM (4)

SCREW (8)

LOCKOUT, BTM (4)

REV		DESCRIPTION	DATE	APPROVED
A		INITIAL DESIGN	1/27/99	BOB B.

APPROVALS		DATE	BY
BOB B.		1/27/99	
BOB B.		1/27/99	

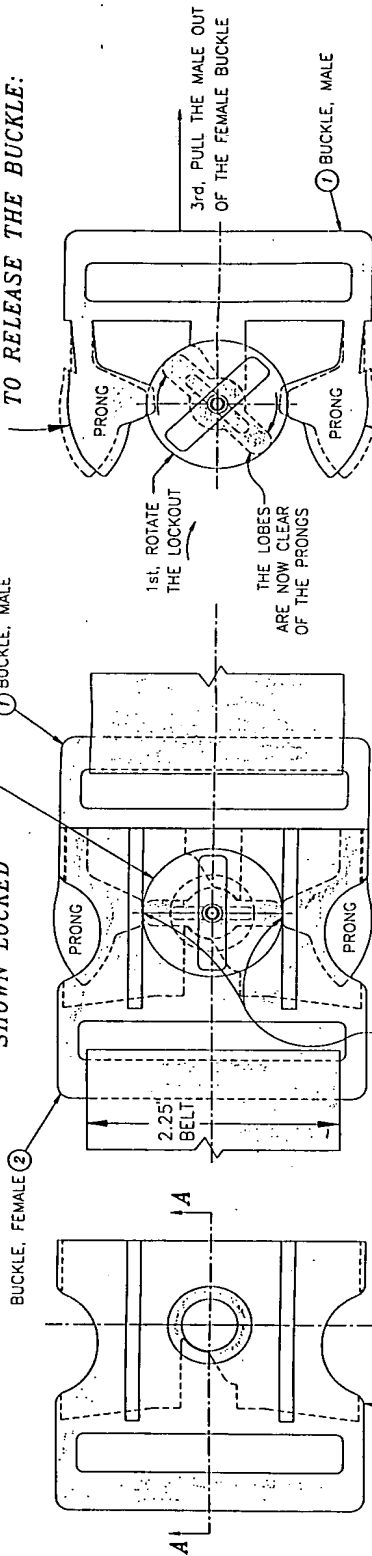
BIANCHI INTERNATIONAL		10000 610-1011
BELT BUCKLE SET #1		
FOR 2.25" BELT		
BUCKLE 1		1 of 1

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NOTES:

REVISIONS		
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
A	INITIAL DESIGN	1/27/99
		APPROVED
		BOB B.

# BUCKLE ASSY SHOWN LOCKED



THESE LOBES PREVENT  
THE PRONGS FROM  
TRAVELING INWARD

3 ROTARY LOCKOUT, TOP

4 ROTARY LOCKOUT, BTM

BUCKLE, FEMALE

2 BUCKLE, FEMALE

3 ROTARY LOCKOUT, TOP

4 ROTARY LOCKOUT, BTM

SECTION A-A

1 BUCKLE, MALE

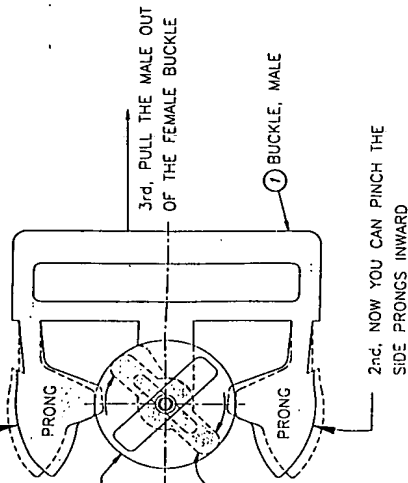
3 ROTARY LOCKOUT, TOP

3 ROTARY LOCKOUT, TOP

LOBE

4 ROTARY LOCKOUT, BTM


TO RELEASE THE BUCKLE:



*Bob B. 1/27/99*

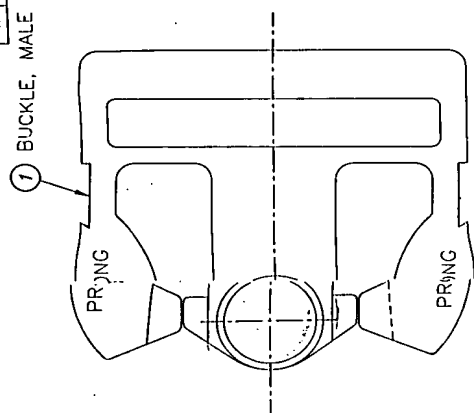
BIANCHI INTERNATIONAL 100 East Lombard Avenue, Suite 200 Chicago, IL 60611 (773) 371-3571	
APPROVALS	DATE
BOB B.	1/27/99
BOB B.	1/27/99
FOR 2.25" BELT	
BUCKLE 2	
SHEET 1 OF 1	

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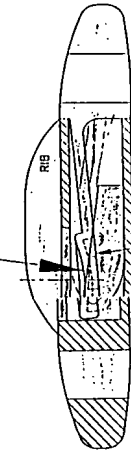
 <b>BLANCHARD</b> INTERNATIONAL 100 State Street, Fremont, CA 94566 (510) 471-5151	APPROVALS	DATE	REV.	BELT BUCKLE, SET #3 FOR 2.25" BELT 1/27/99 C	BUCKLE 3 1/27/99	DO NOT SCALE DRAWING SCALE: 1:1 1/27/99 BUCKLES.dwg Sheet: 1 of 1
	BOB B. BOB B.	1/27/99 1/27/99	1 2			

REVISIONS		
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
A	INITIAL DESIGN	2/74/99

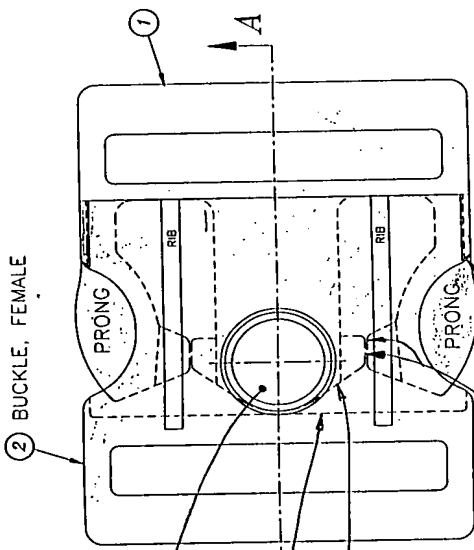
*Bob's copy  
FEB. 24, 1999*



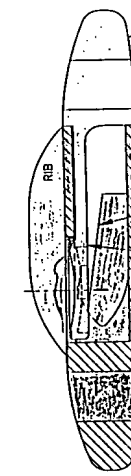
1st, PRESS THE BUTTON TO LOWER THE TONGUE UNDER THE CUTOUTS ON THE PRONGS



3rd, PULL THE MALE OUT OF THE FEMALE BUCKLE



MOVE LUGS FORWARD, EASIER TO CLEAR



BUCKLE ASSY SHOWN LOCKED SECTION A-A

BUCKLE ASSY BEIN RELEASED STEP 1

YOU NEED TO DEPRESS THE TONGUE TO INSERT THE MALE INTO THE FEMALE. THE PRONGS HAVE TO MOVE INWARD UPON ENTRY.

:\CARL\BELT\BUCKLES

APPROVALS	DATE	TITLE
CARL E	2/74/99	BELT BUCKLE SET #4
DESIGNED	BY	FOR 2.25" BELT
CHECKED	BY	BUCKLE 4
DO NOT SCALE DRAWING SCALE: 1:1	DATE	BUCKLE3.dwg



14:57

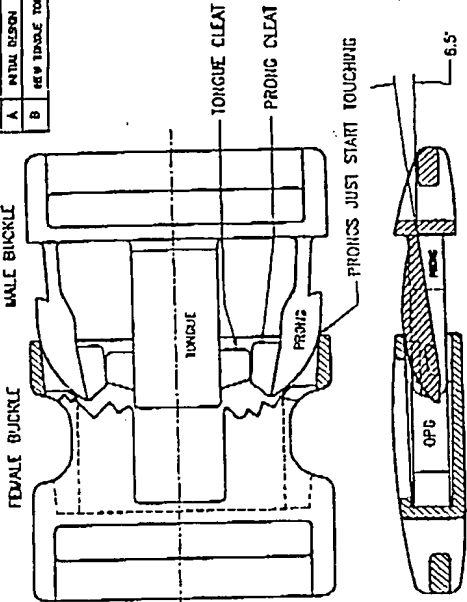
From-BIANCHI GREGFRO

19096766777

T-921 P.05/05 F-542

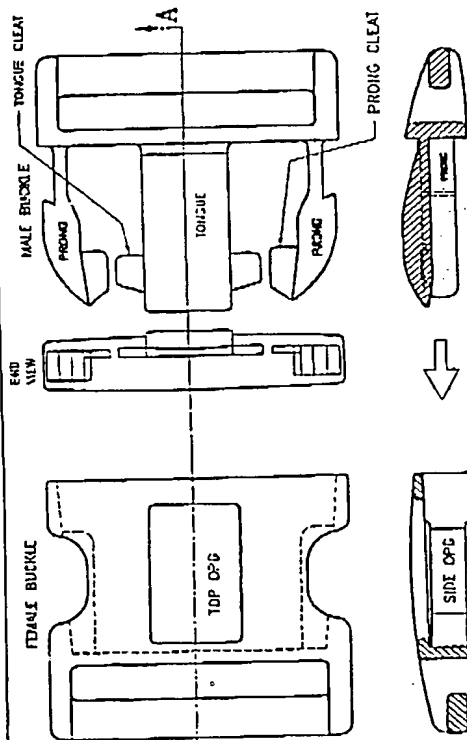
EXHIBIT E

REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	APPD.
A	INITIAL DESIGN	4/19/91	DAE C
B	REV TONGUE TOP SHAPE	5/25/91	DAE C



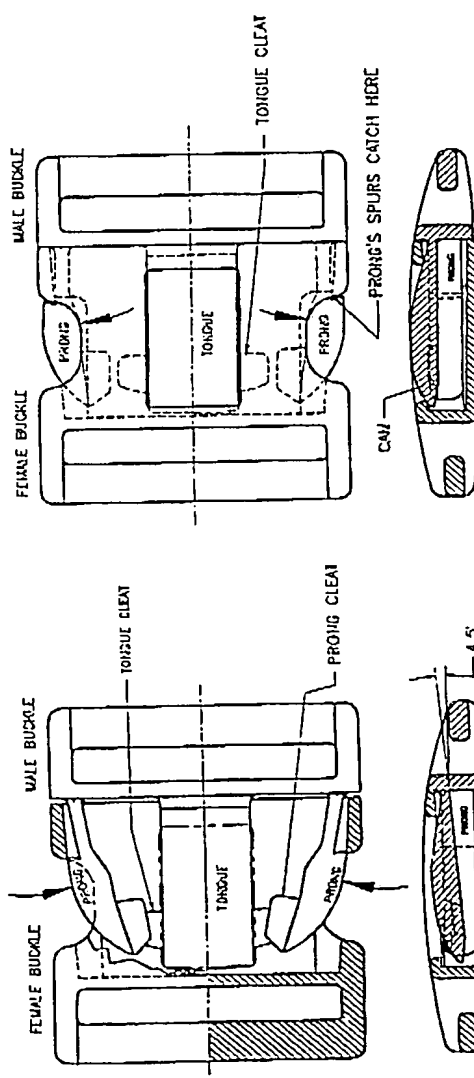
AS YOU PUSH THE MALE INTO THE FEMALE:  
THE TONGUE DEPRESSES TO A 6.5' LIST.  
TONGUE CLEATS ARE LOWER THAN THE PRONG CLEATS.  
THE PRONGS ARE NOT YET SQUEEZING INWARD.

Step 2



SECTION A-A  
CAST PARTS IN RELAXED CONDITION.  
MALE POISED TO ENTER

Step 1



WITH FURTHER PUSHING:  
THE PRONGS ARE SQUEEZING INWARD.  
PRONGS NEAR MAXIMUM INWARD TRAVEL.  
TONGUE @ 4.5' LIST  
TONGUE CLEATS ARE UNDER PRONG CLEATS  
AND TOUCHING.

Step 3

TONGUE @ 0.0' LIST  
MALE IS FULLY INWARD:  
PRONGS SHAP OUTWARD INTO SIDE  
THE TONGUE POPS UP TO 0' LIST.  
THE TONGUE CLEATS ROCK THE  
INWARD TRAVEL OF THE PRONGS

Step 4

TO TAKE APART: YOU HAVE TO PRESS DOWN ON THE TONGUE.  
THEN PRESS INWARD ON THE PRONGS TO RELEASE THE MALE BUCKLE.  
NOW, PULL THE TWO HALVES APART.

BUCKLE #4

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BIANCHI INTERNATIONAL 100 Oak Street, Suite 100 San Francisco, CA 94102 (415) 774-1001	BIANCHI BUCKLE #4 HOW IT WORKS DATE: 4/19/91 DRAWN BY: DAVID C. GREGFRO CHECKED BY: DAVID C. GREGFRO INCHES: 1/8" = 1"
APPROVALS DAVID C. GREGFRO DAVID C. GREGFRO DAVID C. GREGFRO	DATE 4/19/91 4/19/91 4/19/91
NO NOT SCALE DRAWING SCALE: 1:1	SHEET 1 OF 1



Exhibit F

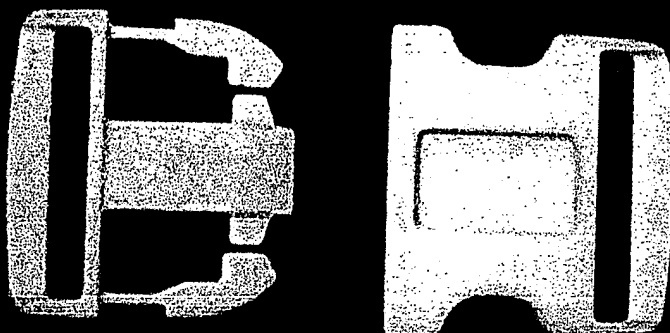


Exhibit G